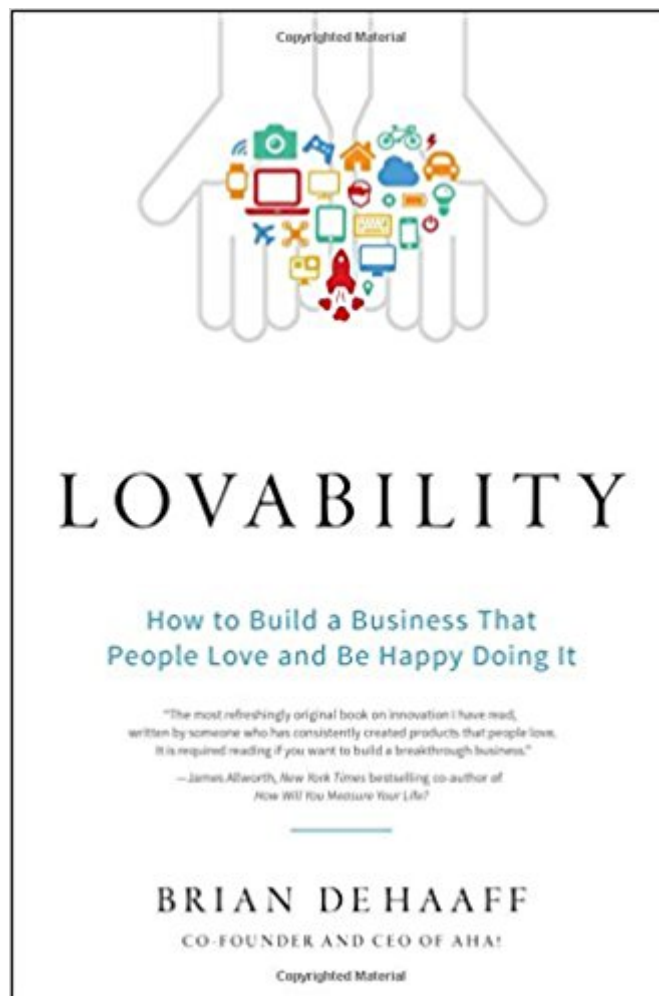


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# Lovability: How To Build A Business That People Love And Be Happy Doing It



## Synopsis

Love is the surprising emotion that company builders cannot afford to ignore. Genuine, heartfelt devotion and loyalty from customers – yes, love – is what propels a select few companies ahead. Think about the products and companies that you really care about and how they make you feel. You do not merely like those products, you adore them. Consider your own emotions and a key insight is revealed: Love is central to business. Nobody talks about it, but it is obvious in hindsight. *Lovability: How to Build a Business That People Love and Be Happy Doing It* shares what Silicon Valley-based author and Aha! CEO Brian de Haaff knows from a career of founding successful technology companies and creating award-winning products. He reveals the secret to the phenomenal growth of Aha! and the engine that powers lasting customer devotion – a set of principles that he pioneered and named The Responsive Method. *Lovability* provides valuable lessons and actionable steps for product and company builders everywhere, including:

- Why you should rethink everything you know about building a business
- What a product really is
- The magic of finding what your customers truly desire
- How to turn business strategy and product roadmaps into customer love
- Why you should chase company value, not valuation
- Surveys to measure your company's lovability

Brian de Haaff has spent the last 20 years focused on business strategy, product management, and bringing disruptive technologies to market. And in preparation for writing this book, he interviewed well-known startup founders, product managers, executives, and CEOs at hundreds of name brand and agile organizations. Their experiences, along with headline-grabbing case studies (both inspiring successes and cautionary tales), will help readers discover how to build something that matters. Much has been written about how entrepreneurs build innovative products and successful businesses, but the author's message is original and refreshing. He convincingly explains that there is a better path forward – a people-first way grounded in love. In a business world that has increasingly emphasized hype over substance and get-big-at-any-cost thinking over profitable and sustainable growth, it's time for a new recipe for company success. Insightful, thought-provoking, and sometimes controversial, *Lovability* is the book that you turn to when you know there has to be a better way.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"In this heartfelt debut, de Haaff, cofounder and CEO of software firm Aha!, lays out a consumer-oriented road map to success. The author obviously takes great pride in having a positive work culture at his company, and he points out that a company needs to be lovable internally as well as externally. With sensible advice and a humanistic tone, this offering will encourage companies big and small to value both customers and employees." --Publishers Weekly

"Lovability will inspire product managers everywhere to build better products." --Chris Yeh, Senior Vice President of Product at Box

"The most refreshingly original book on innovation I have read, written by someone who has consistently created products that people love. It is required reading if you want to build a breakthrough business." --James Allworth, New York Times bestselling co-author of *How Will You Measure Your Life?*

"A must read for innovators everywhere, this book reveals an intriguing, human-centric approach to building products and organizations that will make you rethink everything you have learned about business." --Ekaterina Walter, Wall Street Journal bestselling author of *Think Like Zuck*

"This book shares the secrets to building winning products and outlines a clear path to success. Tech leaders and innovators will want to keep a copy on-hand at all times." --John Peters, Silicon Valley-based management consultant

"Product managers will find useful guidance in the pages of Lovability." --Jeff Lash, Service Director, Product Management at SiriusDecisions

"Lovability is a must-read leadership book for company builders. Building products that people love not only feels good for customers and employees, but is also good business." --Connie DeWitt, Senior Vice President, Product Management at Adaptive Insights

In this heartfelt debut, de Haaff, cofounder and CEO of software firm Aha!, lays out a consumer-oriented road map to success. The author obviously takes great pride in having a positive work culture at his company, and he points out that a company needs to be lovable internally as well as externally. With sensible advice and a humanistic tone, this offering will encourage companies

big and small to value both customers and employees.” --Publishers Weekly

Brian de Haaff seeks business and wilderness adventure. He has more than 20 years of experience building breakthrough products and has founded multiple successful software companies. He is the co-founder and CEO of Aha! – one of the fastest growing companies in the U.S. and the world’s #1 product roadmap software. His two previous startups were acquired by well-known public companies. Brian writes and speaks about product and company growth and the adventure of living a meaningful life. More than 200,000 people follow him on social media and he is a regular contributor to Inc., Entrepreneur, and The Huffington Post. He has been named multiple times by LinkedIn as one of the world’s 10 most influential management and culture writers. He is a proud graduate of both The University of California at Berkeley and Northwestern University. Brian lives in Silicon Valley with his wife and three sons.

Refreshing addition to my professional bookshelf -- there’s an emphasis on honest business practices and improving the experience for both your customers and your employees. Recommend to product managers at any stage!

Unconventional yet practical wisdom. I have read a lot of "business" books but they tend to say the same things. After following Brian on LinkedIn for some time, I decided to buy his book. Not disappointed. He has a fresh approach. There are examples from other companies but also his own experiences. He shares how his company has become so successful and gives exercises at the end. We have an informal book club at work and I made this our next pick.

A lovable book! I follow Brian on LinkedIn and enjoyed his writing enough to pre-order. I’m glad I did. Receiving the copy early allowed me to consume this interesting and intelligent read over the weekend. Anyone looking to build a product (or a company) will appreciate the many take-aways from the book as they are, like Brian’s postings, presented in a compelling and readable style. I look forward to purchasing copies for my clients, and to implementing the responsive method in my own business.

I have been a customer of Aha! for nearly two years. The product is terrific and has become an indispensable part of our way of working (I work for a media company). What has amazed me since we first started using Aha! is the rapid pace with which they introduce new features. And not just

features for the sake of doing something new, but really good and useful additions. In addition, the customer support is second to none. The folks that respond to email and phone inquiries really seem to "get it." So, when I saw that Brian de Haaff published this book I just had to get a copy. I wanted to understand how he built a company and a product that, yes, "I Love!" This book pulls back the covers and shares the details of how he did it. If that was all I had gotten from the time invested I would have considered it time well spent. However, I also took from it some new ways of thinking about building great products and structuring an organization to bring it to market. Caution and be forewarned: This book may make you want to give up what you are doing and go work with Brian and the team at Aha!

I couldn't get past Chapter 2 because it just felt like I was reading about how Aha! does business. I admire Aha! as a product/business, and I have read some of the blog posts on their website. However, reading about how they do business on their website is one thing, but having all the ideas (again, up to Chapter 2) basically be an explanation or a description of what Aha! does wasn't really what I wanted. I searched my Kindle app for how many mentions of Aha! there were and there are 154 in a book that is about 280 pages. Some of those are probably from the acknowledgements and index, etc. but even at 100 mentions, that means Aha! is talked about every 2-3 pages. I decided to stop reading after that. I skimmed through some of the other chapters and some of the ideas seemed interesting (though generally a bit obvious); in general, it seems like it could've been shortened and been made to be a series of blog posts on the Aha! website instead. That said, if you are very new to product management or want to know more about how Aha! does business and their philosophies, you might be more likely to enjoy this book. I found many of the ideas pretty obvious or long-winded. I have read some blog posts on the Aha! website and I will continue to do that, as I do think Brian seems to be quite knowledgeable. Given that Aha! is a company of product managers, they do have many interesting posts that are interesting. Unfortunately, I don't feel that this type of writing translated well into the book.

The concept of building a product that people love is not new, but the means by which to achieve that result is often evasive to Product Managers. Let's face it, it's not an easy task. Brian de Haaff has cracked the code and how to achieve these results and have shared it with all us Product Managers so we can all be successful at building lovable products. Thank you, Brian, for your dedication to helping us all build better products and for writing such an outstanding book.

Lovability shares practical advice to guide you in your own journey towards building a lovable business of your own. While I would agree with other reviewers that the concept is not new -- we all want to be loved -- I am astonished by how few people are willing to open up about it from a business perspective. For this simple fact, Lovability is a breath of fresh air. Such a simple concept that is so often ignored by businesses and product owners for the sake of growth, and other reasons. Lovability shares with you -- the reader -- a proven approach (along with numerous stories, anecdotes, and examples) for setting yourself down the path that the team at Aha! has successfully navigated. Kudos for sharing the story!

I had a keen interest in checking out this book after having it recommended to me by some former product management colleagues. I'm so glad that I did as the book didn't disappoint. The book contained thought-provoking, refreshing, and non-mainstream insights for building both a great product and company. I think Brian may be on to something as far as pioneering a new model for the company of the future. Whether you are the entrepreneurial type looking to start your own business, an aspiring product manager, or a manager or executive as part of a much larger organization responsible for delivering products or services, there is something to be learned and gained in this book by everyone.

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